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SPEECH

OF

HON. FRANCIS P. BLAIR, JR.,

OF MISSOURI,

ON THE

ACQUISITION OF CENTRAL AMERICA;

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 14, 1858.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED AT THE CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE OFFICE.

1858.

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ACQUISITION OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

The House having resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and resumed the consideration of the President's annual message—

Mr. BLAIR said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Whenever it shall be in order, I shall offer to the House the following resolution, which covers the ground that I propose to discuss:

Resolved, That a select committee, to consist of—members, be appointed by the Speaker, with instructions to inquire into the expediency of providing for the acquisition of territory either in the Central or South American States, to be colonized with colored persons from the United States who are now free, or who may hereafter become free, and who may be willing to settle in such territory as a dependency of the United States, with ample guarantees of their personal and political rights.

It was remarked by a gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. MAYNARD] the other day, on this floor, that he had hoped and believed that this question would be discussed and disposed of without reference to the subject of slavery, because, he said, there were no slaves in Central America. The inquiry was made immediately, by many around me, "How long will it be before there are slaves there?" This inquiry shows, what is almost universally felt to be true, that the slavery question is at the bottom of this whole movement. There is a party in this country who go for the extension of slavery; and these predatory incursions against our neighbors are the means by which territory is to be seized, planted with slavery, annexed to this Union, and, in combination with the present slaveholding States, made to dominate this Government, and the entire continent; or, failing in the policy of annexation, to unite with the slave States in a southern slaveholding Republic. I believe that there are those

who entertain such a purpose. I am opposed to the whole scheme, and to every part of it; and, in order to oppose it successfully, I think we should recur to the plans cherished by the great men who founded this Republic. I think we ought to put it out of the power of any body of men to plant slavery anywhere on this continent, by taking immediate steps to give to all of these countries that require it, and especially to the Central American States, the power to sustain free institutions under stable governments; and, as one method of doing this, we might plant those countries with a class of men who are worse than useless to us, who would prove themselves to be of immense advantage to those countries, who would attract the wealth and energy of our best men to aid and direct them in developing the incredible riches of those regions, and thus open them to our commerce, and the commerce of the whole world. I refer to our enfranchised slaves, all of that class who would willingly embrace the offer to form themselves into a colony under the protection of our flag, and the guarantee of the Republic of every personal and political right necessary to their safety and prosperity.

What I propose is not new; it is bottomed on the reasoning and recommendation of Mr. Jefferson. Speaking of a proposition, similar in many respects, urged by him upon the Legislature of his native State, he says:

"It was, however, found that the public mind would not yet bear the proposition, nor will it bear it even at this day; yet the day is not far distant when it must bear it and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people (the negroes) are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally

free, cannot live in the same Government. Nature, habit, opinion, have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of EMANCIPATION AND DEPORTATION, and in such slow degree as that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be *pari passu* filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up. We should in vain look for an example in the Spanish deportation or deletion of the Moors."

The time has ripened for the execution of Mr. Jefferson's plan. By adopting it, we may relieve ourselves of a people who are a burden to us; give to them an amount of happiness and comfort they can never realize here, where they are treated as a degraded class; reinvigorate the feeble people of the southern Republics, and open up to the enterprise of our merchants the untold wealth of the intertropical region, containing a greater amount of productive land than all the balance of the continent; put a stop to the African slave trade, which is created and kept up by the demand for tropical productions; by supplying that demand by the labor of the only class of freemen capable of exertion in that climate. I make this proposition to meet, oppose, and defeat that which seeks by violence to reestablish slavery, reopen the African slave trade, subject those regions, in Walker's own language, "*to military rule*," and exclude from them the people of the northern States. I shall discuss and compare these propositions as fully as the time limited will allow me.

Mr. Randolph, in one of his most celebrated speeches in the Senate, addressing himself to Mr. Calhoun, said:

"Sir, I know there are gentlemen, not only from the southern, but the northern States, who think that this unhappy question—for such it is—of negro slavery, which the Constitution has vainly attempted to blink by not using the term, should never be brought into public notice, more especially into that of Congress, and most especially here. Sir, with every due respect for the gentlemen who think so, I differ with them *toto caelo*. Sir, it is a thing which cannot be hid. It is not a dry rot that you can cover with a carpet until the house tumbles about your ears. You might as well try to hide a volcano in full operation. It cannot be hid; it is a cancer on your face, and must not be tampered with by quacks, who never saw the disease or the patient, and prescribe across the Atlantic. It must be, if you will, let alone.

"But no, sir; the politico-religious quacks, like the quack in medicine and in everything else, will hear of nothing but his nostrum; all is to be forced—nothing can be trusted to time or to nature. The disease has run its course; it has run its course in the northern States, it is beginning to run its course in Maryland. The natural death of slavery is the unprofitableness of its most expensive labor. It is also beginning in the meadow and grain country of Virginia—among those people there who have no staple that can pay for slave labor."

He then points his conclusion in a way to make

it stick in the memories of the masters of slaves, to whom he addressed himself:

"The moment the labor of the slave ceases to be profitable to the master, or very soon after it has reached that stage, *if the slave will not run away from the master, the master will run away from the slave.*"

Mr. Chairman, I am Mr. Randolph's proselyte; he was no Abolitionist, although aware that slavery was sapping the very foundations of the free institutions of his country—a cancer on the face, which, unless removed, would eat into the vitals of the Republic. I concur in his opinion, that the master must run away from his slaves, unless they run away from him. Unhappily for the slave States, many of their enterprising young men leave their native land for those States where individual ability and exertion are sufficient to confer wealth and eminence; and all of that oppressed class who are compelled to labor with their naked hands, and struggle for existence in competition with the monopolizing slave power that holds the soil, and bands together, by a common interest, the capital, the intelligence, and influence of the order controlling the government of the Commonwealth to make it paramount, would also fly, if they had the means of flight, or a spot on earth they could call their own to receive them. Although the time has not yet come when the masters are ready to run away from their slaves, it will doubtless come, if ever that great mass of freemen who feel the weight of the institution pressing them to the earth, should have the means of reaching homesteads in happier regions, where their labor might render them independent. Can any condition be more lamentable for a State than that which makes it the obvious interest of the mass of its free population to abandon it? and if poverty prevents this desertion, the cause of detention, constantly increasing, must in the end grow into a frightful calamity.

Every statesman who has looked into the condition of the slave States, has always found it full of difficulties. Mr. Randolph's solution does not end them, unless we go a step further. Where would the slaves go if they could run away? The North may receive an absconding straggler here and there, but what States would receive five million of slaves? or how would the runaways be anywhere provided for? The free States which have put an interdict, so far away as remote Oregon, upon the admission of free blacks, even in the stinted number which might come from the limited emancipation permitted in the South, would hardly receive millions upon a general jail delivery. Nor can the masters run away from their slaves, unless the North is ready to become a St. Domingo;

nor emancipate them *en masse* without making it a St. Domingo.

Mr. Randolph had a grave meaning in the alternatives he suggests for the riddance of slavery, although its strong sense, as usual with him, is pointed with sarcasm. His will shows how the slaves were to run away from their masters. That testament delivers a practical lesson to his State, more pregnant with sage advice than any ever received from his eloquent lips, on which she hung with such rapture.

The first and second bequests read thus:

"1. I give and bequeath to my slaves their freedom, heartily regretting that I have ever been the owner of one.

"2. I give to my executors a sum not exceeding eight thousand dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to transport and settle said slaves to and in some other State or Territory of the United States, giving to all above the age of forty not less than ten acres of land each."

No man ever more thoroughly understood the interest, or more filially studied the heart of Virginia, than John Randolph. The words I have read will one day be embodied in a statute of the State.

Washington had led the way in this mode of deliverance, manumitting all his slaves by will; and this was in pursuance of what long before he said the interests of Maryland and Virginia demanded. In his letter to Sir John Sinclair, in reference to these States, he said: "Gradual abolition," "nothing is more certain, they must have, and at a period not remote." It seems, however, from an earlier letter to La Fayette, that he contemplated, with peculiar pleasure, the idea of their enfranchisement. He says to the Marquis:

"Your late purchase of an estate in Cayenne, with a view of emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit might diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country!"

He did not expect this at once, for he adds:

"To set the slaves afloat at once, would, I really believe, be productive of much inconvenience and mischief; but by degrees it might, and assuredly ought, to be effected, and that by legislation."

The legislation resulted differently, as is shown in the closing passage of Mr. Jefferson's will, in relation to the slaves, which his incumbered estate enabled him to dispose of. It is in these words:

"I give them their freedom, and earnestly request of the Legislature of Virginia a confirmation of the bequest of freedom to these servants, with permission to remain in this State, where their families and connections are, as an additional instance of the favor of which I have received so many manifestations in my life, and for which I now give them my last solemn and dutiful thanks."

The "gradual abolition" contemplated by

Washington had, before Mr. Jefferson's death, made so large a class of free negroes as to endanger the safety of the white race by inciting formidable insurrections among the slaves, besides producing the lesser inconveniences apprehended. Hence the law prohibiting manumission without the removal of the emancipated slaves from the State. Mr. Randolph's love for his own State was so great that he set an example of an exodus by sending his tribe of freed blacks beyond the confines of Virginia, at the cost of much mischief to another State. By the legislation of many free States the intrusion of such emigration was soon prevented; and it may now be asserted with truth, that the laws of the free and the slave States combine to perpetuate slavery! for where is the freed man to go? A few rich masters provide the means to return their bondsmen to Africa; and recently some small parties embarked to Mexico, to throw themselves upon the humanity of its semi-barbarous people. There is no alternative but to submit to expulsion, or to refuse the boon of freedom. There existed at least a half million manumitted slaves before the proscriptive laws were passed at the North or South. In the latter section, where the intercourse of the enfranchised and enslaved of the same race is pregnant with danger, measures are in progress to reduce all to the condition of slavery. Laws have been passed in some of the slave States providing that the freed may subject themselves again to servitude, if they can find a master. During the summer and fall another step was taken in this direction by large meetings in Virginia, praying the Legislature to authorize a sweeping sale of all free blacks by auction—to reduce the entire race within the State, however slightly tinctured with negro blood, to bondage.

Mr. Chairman, there is nothing in the comparative progress of the slave and free States, since the illustrious patriots of Virginia, in the last and most solemn act of their lives, bore their testimony against the institution which now convulses the Confederacy, tending to condemn their policy. There is much in the aspect now given to our affairs by that fatal element, against which their forecast gave warning, to prove that their solicitude to remove it had its root in that sound judgment and devoted love to the country, which made the strongest features of their characters. One great difficulty obstructed these efforts. Emancipation was easy, but the amalgamation of the white and black races was abhorrent, and their existence as equals, under the same Government, was for that reason impossible. They were, nevertheless, resolved to make the experiment of the

gradual abolition of slavery, hoping that time would make some outlet to the degraded caste. I believe the existing circumstances on this continent now justify that hope. The attempt of African colonization, to relieve us of the load, has failed. The immense distance, and the barbarous state of the mother country, to which we would restore its improved race that has arisen among us, has paralyzed all the efforts of the benevolent society that has labored so long in vain to form a community in Liberia which would draw hence its kindred emancipated population, and establish a nation there to spread civilization and religion over Africa. Time has shown that the causes which have produced races, never to improve Africa, or to be improved there, but to abandon it and give their vigor and derive their advancement in other climes, are not to be reversed by the best efforts of the best of men. "Westward the star of empire takes its way," is a prophecy which will find its accomplishment within the tropics as well as outside of them on this continent. Liberty and security promote enterprise and industry, and so create that intelligence which brings in its train civilization and Christianity. Africa is a desert, in which every effort to propagate the elements which lead to such results have proved failures; and for ages Africa has ever been "the house of bondage."

As Americans, it is our first interest to take care of this continent, and provide for the races on whose faculties and labor its advancement depends. In my opinion, the door is now open in Central America to receive the enfranchised colored race born amongst us, and which has received, with our language and the habits contracted under our institutions, much that adapts it to sustain a part in giving stability to the institutions copied from ours in the Central American Republics.

Mr. Wells, an American gentleman of high talents and attainments, with a view to promote commercial enterprises originating with a merchant of New York, recently traversed Central America under most favorable auspices, in order to explore its resources and obtain certain mining and commercial privileges from the Government of Honduras. His volume, published at the close of the year 1856, and which gives the condition of the country down to the end of Walker's first invasion, is full of information as to the capabilities of the country, and the posture of the parties that distract it. It shows on what the Liberals, who emancipated the country from Spain, rely for the preservation of its freedom. He was intimate with Cabañas, the late enlightened and most liberal

President of Honduras, whose policy he indicates in the brief passages I now read from his book:

"Although as a Spanish American, Cabañas was personally opposed, at the commencement of his administration, to the encouragement of enterprises through which strangers would be likely to obtain a dangerous ascendancy in Central America, he was gradually induced, by the influence of Señors Cacho and Mejiu, his Ministers, to dismiss these objections. In the midst of his harassing campaign in Gracias, in the month of July, he found time to turn his attention toward the interoceanic railway project; and to Cabañas should be ascribed the double honor of conquering his inborn prejudices against foreigners, and of giving the principal impulse to an enterprise likely to assume an importance second to none in the present age.

"Actuated by the same laudable intentions, and penetrated with the conviction that only through northern industry and enterprise can the Spanish-American races be raised to a permanent grade of prosperity, Señor Barrundia, then far advanced in years, and frequently referred to in this sketch, as a talented and zealous member of the Liberal party, was dispatched to Washington as the first diplomatic agent ever sent to the United States by Honduras, as a distinct Power. His death at New York, on the 6th of August, of the same year, put an untimely end to the negotiations, and frustrated the dawning hopes of the Liberals."

The precise object aimed at in the negotiation proposed to our President, is made conspicuous in the address of the Minister Barrundia, one of the great and learned men of the country, the last of its revolutionary stock, whose eloquence and wisdom in its councils led the way to the achievement of its independence. His presentation speech uttered the sentiments of the President of Honduras, as well as those of the venerable patriot and statesman and all the liberals he led, who founded that Republic on the basis of our North American Confederacy. Every word of it is pregnant with political meaning to which time will give effect; and the House cannot fail to mark these sentences in the address, and give emphasis to the closing words:

"The mission with which I am charged is perhaps more significant than any which has yet originated in Central America, and its objects are such as are seldom confided to an ordinary legation. It relates to the vital interests of an American people struggling against the antagonism of monarchical principles, which, unfortunately, in some parts of this continent are seeking to change the blessings of liberty and independence for alien protectorates and irresponsible dictatorships."

In a little more than a year afterwards the last words became facts. Carrera, a mestizo, of mixed Spanish and Indian blood, had, years before, by the aid of his Indian allies, made himself Dictator of Guatemala; then turning his force against Cabañas, President of Honduras and chief of the Liberals, he placed Santos Guardiola, another mestizo, in a dictatorship over that State. It is with this latter chieftain that the British Govern-

ment has negotiated its treaty, resigning the Bay Islands to the so-called Republic, but still holding them under the "alien protectorate" of British institutions. I will read a single page from the lucid sketch given by Mr. Wells's book, which is, in fact, his report to the American merchants who employed him to examine the state of the country, in which they designed to prosecute their commercial enterprises. In this passage he makes an epitome which grasps the whole history:

"It will be seen that the main cause of the devastating wars of Central America, has been the division of the States into irreconcilable parties; one advocating the continuance of the obsolete forms of the Spanish viceroyalty, and the revival of the extinct aristocratical institutions of the colonial period; and the other, emulous of the astonishing progress of the United States under a purely republican government, vainly attempting to establish a similar system, and shedding their best blood in the thirty years' struggle to that end.

"Of the patriotic motives of the Liberals, scarcely one among the few native and foreign writers upon the politics of Central America but pay a deserved tribute to their earnest exertions in behalf of their country. An English author includes in the Liberal party some few who had been distinguished men under the monarchy, the greater portions of the legal and medical professions, or, in other words, the *élite* of the University, who had preferred these studies to that of theology or canons, not so much as a means of support as because they are almost the only careers open to those who reject the ecclesiastical vocation. 'It also numbered many merchants and landed proprietors, supported by a numerous body, composed of the more intelligent artisans and laborers. Their leaders were men of very decided democratical principles, of unquestionable ability, and, considering the school they were brought up in and the influence that surrounded them, they manifested no small amount of true patriotism and devotedness to their convictions; though, alas! in too many instances, stained with venality and even with deeds of oppression and blood. What they overthrew, and what they accomplished for the State is honorable alike to their talents and their sentiments; and though the limits of a sketch will scarcely admit a due appreciation of it, a cursory view of their achievements, taking into consideration the circumstances of the people, and of the times, will probably excite more wonder, and certainly merits higher praise, than the victories of Alvarado.'

"Since Guardiola's usurpation of the supreme power in Honduras, the State has assumed a temporary importance abroad, by the arrangement of a treaty between its Government and that of Great Britain, by which the Central American question was finally settled, the Bay Islands restored to the Republic, and the British protectorate withdrawn from the Mosquito territory. The communication of Señor Alvarado, Honduras's Minister to Great Britain, announcing to his Government the conclusion of the treaty, is dated London, September 15, 1856. The principal feature in the convention was the right accorded to the inhabitants of the Bay Islands to maintain their own municipal government, to be administered by legislative, executive, and judicial officers of their own election; trial by jury in their own courts; freedom of religious belief and worship, public and private; exception from military service except for their own

defense; and from all taxation on real or other property beyond such as may be imposed by their own municipality and collected for the treasury of the same, and to be applied to the common benefit.

"The stipulations concerning religious freedom and trial by jury are thus forced on Honduras, and furnish the germs from which these eminently Anglo-Saxon ideas must eventually spread to the main land. Under the Federal Republic the attempt to introduce this gave rise to the sanguinary conflicts between the authorities and the Indians, who then, as now, were incapable of appreciating its benefits. The privileges thus accorded to an integral portion of the State afford the first instance of the establishment in Central America of republican institutions, which are not subject to overthrow at the caprice of temporary rulers."

It seems that our American observer, standing on the spot—however averse to this British obtrusion—is obliged to admit that it afforded "the first instance of the establishment in Central America of republican institutions which are not subject to overthrow at the caprice of temporary rulers." But what says our President in reference to this convention? He revolts at it, because, (I read his words:)

"Whilst declaring the Bay Islands to be a free territory under the sovereignty of Honduras, it deprived that Republic of rights without which its sovereignty over them could scarcely be said to exist. It divided them from the remainder of Honduras, and gave to their inhabitants a separate Government of their own, with legislative, executive, and judicial officers, elected by themselves. It deprived the Government of Honduras of the taxing power in every form and exempted the people of the islands from the performance of military duty, except for their own exclusive defense. It also prohibited that Republic from erecting fortifications upon them for their protection; thus leaving them open to invasion from every quarter; and, finally, it provided 'that slavery shall not at any time hereafter be permitted to exist therein.'"

This last point is marked by inverted commas in the message, by way of showing that he gives the exact words of the treaty in that clause, which crowns the climax of its obnoxious impositions. It is strange that our President in his enumeration of the shocking guarantees with which England incumbered her surrender of the Bay Islands to the mercy of the dictator, omitted those which were closely associated with, and gave vitality to that interdicting slavery. They were the *right of habeas corpus, trial by jury, and freedom of religious belief and worship.*

But Mr. Buchanan put his mark on that line of the treaty which excited so much abhorrence in that part of the Senate, which was, and is still laboring to force slavery on Kansas. He "sticks a pin there" and thus tells them, "I join you in making war upon the establishment of Anglo-Saxon institutions in any part of Central America, coupled with the exclusion of slavery, because they will frustrate the design we have formed and

sent Walker to execute," and which the latter plainly avows in the following passage of a letter to one of his emissaries embarked with him in the enterprise. In his letter to Goicuria, sent by him as minister to England, he says:

"With your versatility, and, if I may use the term, adaptability, I expect much to be done in England. You can do more than any American could possibly accomplish, because you can make the British Cabinet see that we are not engaged in any scheme for annexation; *you can make them see that the only way to cut the expanding and expansive democracy of the North, is by a powerful and compact southern federation based on military principles.*"

Again he says:

"Tell — he must send me the news, and let me know whether 'Cuba must and shall be free' but not for the Yankees, Oh! no! that fine country is not fit for those barbarous Yankees! What would such a psalm-singing set do in the island?"

In his letter to the Hon. C. J. Jenkins, of Georgia, Walker admits that though he did not go to Central America to establish slavery, that measure was the guiding star of his policy after he reached there. He admits, too, that the decree issued with this object in view, was his individual act, and that it was opposed by the whole body of native inhabitants. He asserts, also, that the measure was resorted to by him as part of a system for promoting "the increase of negro slavery on this continent."

Now, whether the President sent his fleet to Nicaragua to protect that State from Walker's attempt, in compliance with the late treaty, or to make a cover for our national honor, *and a cover for the enterprise endangered by another fleet hovering on that coast*, remains a problem. In one view, the policy contemplated by him is very clear. No man can look at the complexion of the Cabinet with which he is surrounded; at the hardy attempts of every branch of the Government to propagate slavery North and South; at the manifest determination, both of the Senate and the late and the present President, to keep open the Central American dispute with the British Government, making its treaty with Honduras for the exclusion of slavery from the Bay Islands the main difficulty, without seeing that there is a latent purpose of forcing slavery on that region against the will of a majority of the people of the Union, and making the Confederacy submit to a fragment of it, under the threat of flying off.

The purpose of subjecting Central America to slavery has been boldly proclaimed; and the opening of the African slave trade is relied upon to fill up the void in the laboring population which must be made by the war and the expulsion of dangerous classes. Is it not a degradation of the nation

which stands on this continent as the first asserter of its freedom and independence, and the great exemplar of popular sovereignty in the world, to have a Chief Magistrate and controlling councils harboring designs which they dare not avow, and seeking by sly intrigues to involve it in a war, to accomplish schemes which the people would spurn with disgust, if promulgated before they became committed in the conflict? I have no doubt my countrymen would regard with just indignation, and resist an attempt by England to turn our flank on the Gulf of Mexico. That she spreads her dominion across this continent, from the Gulf of the St. Lawrence to Vancouver's Island on the Pacific, bringing its pressure to bear upon our whole northern frontier, is as much constraint as can be endured. The nation would be willing to close this century as it began—in hostility with England—rather than submit to encroachment in our southern quarter. For this reason our Government insisted that Great Britain should abandon the assumed protectorate claimed over the coasts of Central America. She relinquished it; but she stipulated with Honduras that the subjects left by her in the Bay Islands should continue to enjoy the free institutions which she had planted there. Our own citizen, Mr. Wells, looking to the establishment of our influence through our institutions in this quarter, hails this step as "*the establishment in Central America of republican institutions, which are not to be overthrown at the caprice of temporary rulers.*"

Can Mr. Buchanan summon hardihood to involve this country in a war to expel the freedom guarantied to the Bay Islands by the treaty made with the dictator Guardiola, and subject them to his absolute authority? I would rather hope that our Government, if not now, may yet, under another Presidency, extend its influence over the mainland of Central America, by giving its support to maintain Governments there based upon its own republican principles. To do this, we must, like England in the case of the Bay Islands, *send our people into the country, protect our merchants in their enterprises there, and make an honest demonstration of the fixed purpose of our Government to build up the prosperity of Central America for its own and our advantage.* What could confer more honor on our national character than the acceptance of the proposal which the illustrious patriot Barrundia, as the last act of his life, submitted to our late President, speaking for Cabañas and the wishes (as Mr. Wells and our diplomatic agent, Mr. Squier, give reason to believe) of the people of Honduras. Barrundia says:

"She offers her commodious ports, her salubrious climate,

and her great but undeveloped resources, to the aid of this undertaking, and freely offers her rich and fertile country to the enterprise and industry of the American people. Honduras should be forever the friend and sister of the United States, and she looks hopefully to the latter for the support of her liberty and independence. May the eternal Disposer of events link together the people of both by the unalterable tie of interest and future mutual prosperity."

He concludes by repeating:

"The earnest solicitude of Honduras to establish a true and intimate fraternity with the United States, in such form that both nations may have a single interest for the common cause of liberty, and in such manner that Honduras may proceed to develop her latent elements of prosperity, and to improve the advantages of a position eminently favored by nature, without a fear of disturbance for the future, *either from civil discord or exterior aggression, should such a fortunate result be attained, Honduras will yet present, in the center of the commercial world, the glorious spectacle of a free and prosperous people sustained by the generosity of the great American Republic.*"

To what a glorious and benevolent mission was our country called by this invocation of Barrundia, compared with those vile buccaneering expeditions set on foot by a body of filibustering malcontents among us, enemies alike of both Republics! They want to set up a government "*under military rule.*" They want to be associated with the slave States, and exclude "*the psalm-singing Yankees.*" They want to repeal the edict emancipating the slaves in the Central American States and enslave them again. And can any one doubt whether these rapacious propagandists of slavery would hesitate, in case of success, to make themselves amends for their toils, sufferings, and dangers, somewhat as Cortez turned these conquests to account, acquired and held "*by military rule?*"

Connected with this overture of Barrundia, on the part of Honduras, freely offering "her rich and fertile country (rich in gold and every species of vegetation) to the enterprise and industry of the American people," in return for security from "civil discord and foreign aggression," was another which addressed itself to the enterprising spirit of our great commercial cities. It was the grant of a charter conferring privileges of immense value to be derived from the construction of an inter-oceanic railroad from the Atlantic bay of Honduras to the bay of Fonseca, on the Pacific. Mr. Wells glances at this when he arrives at Amapala, which he mentions as the projected "terminus of the Honduras inter-oceanic railroad, which, commencing on the Caribbean sea, is designed to pass through the beautiful valley of Comagua, a distance of one hundred and sixty-eight miles, and with an average grade, as the reports of the surveys of Mr. E. G. Squier state,

of only twenty-eight feet to the mile." He continues:

"While Panama and Nicaragua were early made the field of American enterprise for the establishment of an inter-oceanic communication, it is a little singular that speedier attention was not directed to this route to the Pacific, which is shorter than any other, not excepting that of Tehuantepec, and offers facilities for the construction of an inter-oceanic railroad, not exceeded by any other."

He adds:

"Extraordinary inducements are offered for the furthering of this great enterprise; one of the principal of which is the existence of safe and capacious harbors at either terminus, (an advantage not possessed by the Tehuantepec route,) and the comparative small amount of grading and bridging to be done."

In the following paragraph he describes the site of the intended terminus on the Pacific side:

"The first impression on landing at Tigre Island (in the bay on the Pacific side) is its splendid facilities for fortification, and the formation of a great central commercial depot from which to command the trade of the three States bordering on the bay of Fonseca. Its resources fully developed, Amapala might be made the most important port on the Pacific coast, south of San Francisco. In 1850, Mr. E. G. Squier, during his *chargéship*, forwarded a series of dispatches to the United States Government, in which he advocated the advantages of entering into negotiations with Honduras for the establishment of a naval station at Amapala. Should this plan be adopted, the yearly increasing means of communication between California and the eastern States would soon place a United States squadron within seven days of Washington; with the construction of the contemplated Honduras railroad, and the appliances of telegraphs and steamers, Government orders of the most vital importance to the nation could reach our squadron in the Pacific in three and a half days. The town is now the principal, or rather the only real port where large vessels or steamers may anchor and discharge, on the Pacific coast of the three Republics of Honduras, San Salvador, or Nicaragua."

Our Presidents, of late years, have not been able to lift their vision to look beyond a President-nominating convention. Without having rendered service of any sort to recommend them to the favor of the nation, these conventional aspirants rely on their location in the North, the skill in party tactics acquired by them as subalterns at the drill, and the cunning acquired in the intrigues necessary to give prominence to an eager ambition, without the higher faculties to promote it, fitted these men to become the instruments of a section to defeat the sound, settled policy of the nation. Fillmore was too busy in making covert compliances to ingratiate himself with those pressing from the South to extend the area of slavery North and West, to listen to our *Chargé* in Central America, when urging the expansion of our national greatness in a direction to have its just control over the continent and the oceans that washed its shores. Pierce was so sunk in his submission to

the plotters laboring to crush Kansas under slavery, that the overtures of Barrundia, which would have lifted a whole galaxy of independent States, with open bosom to welcome the enterprise and industry of our countrymen and the influence of our Government, were unheeded. The voice of an empire, uttered by its noblest patriot and statesman, its eloquent philosopher, the scholar who modeled its Government after our own, fell upon his ear as "upon the dull, cold ear of death." But "the day of small things," of enslaved Presidents, of buccaneers, will pass away, and the nation of the New World will resume the attitude which the moral grandeur of the great man who directed its affairs for the first half century, gave it. Then the time will come for a new movement on this continent, which will confer prosperity on these races of men.

Mr. Chairman, it is evident to every man of thought that the freed blacks hold a place in this country which cannot be maintained. Those who have fled to the North are most unwelcome visitors. The strong repugnance of the free white laborer to be yoked with the negro refugee breeds an enmity between races, which must end in the expulsion of the latter. Centuries could not reconcile the Spaniards to the Moors, and although the latter were the most useful people in Spain, their expulsion was the only way to peace. In spite of all that reason or religion can urge, nature has put a badge upon the African, making amalgamation revolting to our race. Centuries have shown that even the aboriginal race of this continent, although approaching our species in every respect more nearly, perish from contiguity with the white man. But I will not argue the point. The law of the North has put its ban upon immigration of negroes into the free States.

In the South, causes more potent still make it impossible that the emancipated blacks can remain there. The multiplication of slaves and freed men of the same caste in the section where the dominant race must become proportionally fewer from emigration, has already compelled the latter to prohibit emancipation within the States, and to seek means of deliverance from the free blacks. The northern States will not receive them; the southern States dare not retain them. What is to be done? What was done with the native population which it was found incompatible with the interests of Georgia and the States southwest of the Ohio, and the States northwest, to indulge with homes within their limits? The United States held it to be a national duty to purchase their lands from them, acquire homes for them in other regions, and to hold out inducements and

provide the means for their removal to them. Have not the negroes, born on our soil, who have grown up among us, and although fated to be a burden and obstruction to our progress—yet always in amity and laboring to render service—equal claims upon us with the savages, against whom we have had to fight our way for centuries, resisting all attempts to bring them within the pale of civilization?

The President, in his late message, proposes to gather these savages in colonies, and at an early day raise them to the dignity of forming States, and assuming equality with the States of the Union. The Africans, bred and educated within civilized communities, who speak our language, are listeners at our canvasses, lookers-on at the elections, worshipers in our churches, and constantly witness the processes of improvement in our society, in the field, the work-shop, and every domestic scene—one would think quite as capable of being disciplined in colonies, and fitted to take part in the Government of the Union as the Shawnees, Pottawatomies, Winnebagoes, the Sacs and Foxes, removed from the northwest; or the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles from the southwest; as far as respects the Sioux, Pawnees, Cheyennes, Utahs, Camanches, and Blackfeet, the President might have spared his recommendation until they were caught. I believe the people who constitute this Confederacy will forever scout the idea of blending either Indian or negro States with it. The aboriginal or imported tribes which cannot amalgamate with our race, can never share in its Government in equal sovereignties. In the benevolent design of colonizing the Indians, protecting and aiding their efforts to gain a subsistence by cultivating the soil set apart for them, I most cordially concur; but I think, whatever form of society they may assume, they must always be held as dependencies; not put upon the footing of equality with the States.

And ought not the Government to be equally provident for such portions of the unfortunate race born to slavery, but who, having attained freedom, find that it renders them a burden to those among whom they live—a burden that will not be borne? This is the question which absolute necessity now forces on the consideration of the country—one deeply affecting the interests and feelings of slaveholders and non-slaveholders of the superior race, and of more than half a million already manumitted inferiors pressed down by their weight.

The apparent evil which now produces so much anxiety and agitation here, I feel a firm conviction wise counsels will overrule for good. I

believe that the removal from among us of such of the freed people of color as might be induced willingly to go to such parts of Central America as our Government could open up to them and establish as a secure home, would be fraught with benefits to us, to the emigrants, to the people receiving them, and to all concerned in the commerce of this continent within the tropics. I have already quoted the account of a late visitor and most acute observer, sent to report on the condition of that country. He confirms the general impression in regard to the *effete* state of the Spanish race in Honduras and the other Central American States; the insurrectionary disposition of the Indians and mestizos of mixed Indian and Spanish blood, which produces incessant civil war and revolution; and he shows that the African race constitutes the basis on which some energetic and intelligent Power must build a stable structure of free government. The negroes and mulattoes in Honduras number one hundred and forty thousand; the Indians one hundred thousand; the whites about fifty thousand; but of this caste he remarks, that—

“Indiscriminate amalgamation has nearly obliterated the former distinction of caste, and few families of pure Spanish descent are known. Some of the wealthiest merchants of the department of Tegucigalpa are blacks, possessing a surprising degree of business tact. Two of the largest commercial houses have negro proprietors, whose mercantile relations extend to Europe, whence they import most of their goods. Though the great majority of the negroes of Honduras are a thoroughly debased and ignorant class, there are numerous exceptions. The Senate and Assembly have contained many highly intelligent blacks and mulattoes, thoroughly educated in the Central American school of politics, and with sufficient discernment to foresee the decline of their own influence, and the power of the negro race, with the introduction of the Teutonic stock. Hence their violent opposition to foreign enterprises, in the national councils and in their private circles. The clergy are mostly negroes or mestizos. Their power for evil has been largely contracted since the independence; but, with a few exceptions, these men exercise rather a favorable influence over the people, and are generally respected.”

Mr. Chairman, it is to this country, rich in mines, in every tropical production, and open to our emigrants and to our commerce through two great bays, one on the Pacific and the other on the Atlantic, and within three days' steaming of our own coast, that I would propose to form a settlement for such of our colored race now free, or that may hereafter be freed, as might volunteer to establish it under the auspices of our Government. And touching this most important policy, as calculated to deliver our Republic from the incubus which threatens so much mischief, and to convert it into a means of so much good, I beg leave to take a lesson from the colonial policy of Great

Britain, which received as a system its finished and most liberal form under the late administration of Lord John Russell—Earl Grey presiding over the office of Secretary of State for the Colonial Department. The whole system is developed in a masterly series of letters addressed by the Earl to the Premier, which, with the history of the colonization that has girdled the world with Great Britain's dependencies, gives the reforms that make them adhere to the empire without force and from a sense of mutual advantage embraced in a common power and glory. The particular circumstance in that policy to which I would point the eye, is one which has uniformly characterized it: the transplantation of a better informed people, imbued with the traits they wished to impress on the race they sought to subject to their influence. The example I adduce, as applicable to the scheme I would recommend, is in Earl Grey's letter on Trinidad. Speaking of the various transplantations made for the improvement of Trinidad, he says:

“Steps have also been taken, within the last two years, for procuring immigrants of a far more valuable description than those from India. I refer to the free black and colored inhabitants of the United States. These people are regarded as an incumbrance, and their presence is considered a most serious evil in the States which they now inhabit, while there can be no doubt that many of them would be the best possible settlers who could be introduced into Trinidad. Speaking the English, with habits of industry and of civilized life, and well adapted by their constitution to the climate, there seems to be no reason to doubt the success of black and colored immigrants from the United States. Provided a proper selection is made of the individuals to be brought, their introduction could not fail to be of the highest value to the colony, not only from the actual accession of its population, which would be thus obtained, but from the example which they would afford to its present inhabitants. Such an addition to the existing population of Trinidad would have a tendency to raise the whole community in the scale of civilization; whereas, there is precisely the opposite tendency with respect to immigration from almost any other quarter, and this is no slight drawback to the advantage to be obtained from it;” (that is, from the immigration from India.)

Now this element of strength and improvement which English policy would allure to its West India possessions, I would allure to some congenial region on our own continent, with a view to their welfare, and to the extension of the influence and the commerce of their native country, the United States. I propose for imitation the example of the great pioneer nation in colonization. It has exhibited the elastic power of popular representative self-government, by which it has stretched Great Britain—though a mere salvage of the continent of Europe, saved from the grasp of its despots by a channel of the sea—around the world; erecting an empire greater than

the Roman by the art of making and managing dependencies. Conquest over barbarous tribes by naval and military force, was the first step in this great career. But when these tribes became nations, instructed in the arts of civilization and skilled in the use of arms—a progress urged on as necessary to the commerce, aggrandizement, and defense of England—they would no longer be held subjected by force, and the whole system has been changed gradually into that which is in reality a confederacy, with Great Britain for its head, and her crown the symbol, drawing together the united powers of the whole. Earl Grey describes the principle of this great revolution as follows:

“Keeping steadily in view that the welfare and civilization of the inhabitants of the colonies and the advantage which the empire at large may derive from their prosperity, are the only objects for which the extension of these dependencies is desirable, and believing also that there can be no doubt as to the superiority of free governments, to those of an opposite character, as instruments of promoting the advancement of communities, in which they can be made to work with success, I consider it to be the obvious duty and interest of this country to extend representative institutions to every one of its dependencies, where they have not been established, and where this can be done with safety.”

The late rebellion in Canada was the immediate cause of putting the colonies upon the footing of the mother country in the freedom of its institutions. The American Revolution had taught a lesson that was not lost. Lord Grey says:

“The system now established in Canada is that of parliamentary government; that is to say, government by means of parties. This form of government is now working well in that and the neighboring provinces, and is probably, on the whole, the best plan hitherto adopted of enabling a colony in an advanced stage of its social progress, to exercise the privilege of self-government. It may therefore be regarded as the form which representative institutions, when they acquire their full development, are likely to take in the British Colonies.

In pursuance of this plan, when Lord Elgin was sent to Canada to give it practical effect, his instructions bore on their face the unqualified declaration, that “*it cannot be too distinctly acknowledged that it is neither possible nor desirable to carry on the government of any of the British provinces in North America in opposition to the opinion of the inhabitants.*” This was a declaration of independence by the Government in advance of that contemplated by the people, and the consequence was that the Reformers came into power in the Canadas, and instead of persisting in the idea of annexation to the United States, they have become our rivals in progress, and hold their association with the renown and power of England as conferring advantages over us, from whom they

are content to ask only a fair field for competition on this continent in a reciprocity treaty.

This scheme of securing the allegiance of the nations Great Britain has in her train, by imparting to them the benefit of the free institutions she enjoys, has been carried out, in a greater or less degree, all over the world. In the West Indies, in defiance of the violent opposition of island aristocracies, (the lords of the soil,) the Government consulted the greatest good of the greatest number, and set free all the slaves; and, what was held to be equally disastrous, it struck off the fetters of monopoly, which, by means of differential duties, gave the home market to the sugar-planters without competition. This double act of emancipation, tripled by the repeal of the navigation act, raised the cry of the privileged owners everywhere, that ruin was inevitable. Lord Grey shows the result in figures from the custom-house; and it appears that, both in the West Indies and East Indies, comparing five years before with five years after the act of freedom, the increase of the sugar crops alone, in the last five years, under free labor and free competition, was 635,869 cwts. Mr. D’Israeli, who had been a Tory croaker against these reforms, afterwards, in a speech in Parliament, made the *amende* to Lord John Russell, who was their author. After comparing results in detail, he lumps the matter, and says:

“In other words, British production has increased by 1,250,000 cwts., and foreign production (that is, slave grown sugar) has decreased by about 600,000 cwts. I may be called a traitor, I may be called a renegade; but I want to know whether there is any gentleman in this House, wherever he may sit, who would recommend a differential duty to prop up a prostrate industry which is already commanding the metropolitan market.”

The same system of assimilating the provincial institutions to the British has been pursued in the cannibal island of New Zealand, and brought to bear successfully on that warlike and powerful race, said to be superior to our Shawnees, in bravery and intelligence. They have been trained into stone masons, road builders, farmers, and traders, municipal officers, and legislators, by the elective and representative rights conceded to them under the instruction and assistance of the English authority.

In Australia, once the land of convicts, the experiment works well. There parliamentary tactics are plied, and we hear of debates ending in the expulsion of a ministry who fail to meet the public expectation. It is now a land of gold, of herds, of agriculture, of commerce, of busy cities filled with refinement. Earl Grey tells us that in 1850 a census was taken of one element of this prosperity: “Of persons who had originally been pris-

oners, who were actually in the enjoyment either of entire freedom or that degree of freedom conferred by conditional pardon—the result of the investigation was to show that of such persons in these colonies there could not have been less than forty-eight thousand; and out of this large number, those who were not, in some way or other, maintaining themselves honestly, either by their labor or the property they had acquired, were so few that they formed a mere fraction of the whole.”

The Secretary goes on to account for this by ascribing it to the salutary effect of transplantation; to change of scene, of society and habits, removal from temptation, and being forced by necessity to labor where wages were tempting, in the field or in tending herds, and having the opportunity to form a new character among a new people. Another obvious cause of this reformation, well understood in this country, is found in the ease of acquiring homesteads in the crown lands of Australia. To promote this, regulations were adopted, as Earl Grey expresses it, “with a view of insuring the distribution of land to those by whom it was wanted;” “since,” as he adds, “there is no such fatal obstacle to the progress of a colony as having a large proportion of its lands engrossed by persons who make little use of the estates they acquired.” This was effected by selling to settlers at the minimum price, and then providing that “the money received for the land may be so laid out that the *bona fide* settler may receive, in the increased value for occupation of the land he buys, full compensation for the price he is required to pay for it;” and he adds that it is “an essential part of the policy which ought to be pursued with regard to the alienation of land, that the proceeds of the land sales should be always so applied as to give this advantage to the purchaser.” This is almost a homestead bill; for it gives back the price of the land, received in one hand, by paying it for the improvement of it with the other hand.

I have drawn thus largely on Secretary Grey’s explanation of the colonial policy of Lord John Russell’s administration, to point the eye of our Government to the causes of that success which is now the wonder of the world. India alone gives trouble; and that, doubtless, is attributable to the fact, that it has always been in the hands of a monopolizing company, which has had the right, and exerted it, to exclude Englishmen and English institutions according to its pleasure, out of the provinces, which have been kept for the company’s benefit, in the hands of pensioned Nabobs. Lord Palmerston has already given notice of a

bill which probably will place India in the nation’s keeping.

The position which things are taking on the shores of Central America indicates a rivalry between England and the United States, as to the Power which is to exert the command over that region; to people it, civilize it, give it peace; in a word, make it in some sort a dependency—the only mode of saving it from barbarism, and from becoming a nuisance. The British Government has sent its subjects—free colored persons, Jamaica negroes—into the logwood and mahogany cuttings in Honduras, and into the Bay Islands, where she claimed a protectorate. She has restored the latter to the Government on the main land, stipulating that all the rights that make freemen of the people of England or in the United States shall be held under a sacred guarantee. Mr. Buchanan says in his late message, that this security taken for the people of the Bay Islands, is the establishment of “a State, at all times subject to British influence and control.” And how would he prevent it? By stripping off the civil rights the people enjoy, and subjecting them to a dictator? He especially objects to their having “legislative, executive, and judicial officers, elected by themselves; of being exempt from the taxing power in every form,” against the consent of their representatives; “the performance of military service, except for their own exclusive defense;” but above all, he holds the provision “that slavery shall not at any time hereafter be permitted to exist therein,” to be the most obnoxious.

Now I do not believe that the people of the United States will allow Mr. Buchanan to wage a war against Great Britain to establish slavery in the Bay Islands, any more than they will allow him to establish it in Kansas by force of arms. Nor will they countenance his hostility to freedom of religious belief in the Bay Islands; nor to the elective franchise; nor trial by jury; nor the right of *habeas corpus*; nor of voting the taxes to be imposed on them, and providing exclusively for their own military defense. It is a scandal to the age that an American President objects to the guarantee of the American bill of rights, to secure the freedom of any people.

Instead of opposing, I think we should follow the example of England, and carry to the main land of Central America such of our free colored population as may be willing to go, upon the invitation of the Liberal party in that country, and extend our guarantee of freedom over them and the whole section of country which our Government may acquire, by purchase, for their reception. There is a necessity that some great civil-

ized power should step in, to restore order and industry, under the guarantee of free and stable institutions. England tenders the security of her crown, and the best usages that have ever grown up under a crown. We should offer the support of our Constitution, and the earnest of prosperous freedom which it has assured to our northern Republic. Which they would choose, the southern Republics have already evinced, in the forms they have adopted; and the encroachments of our transatlantic brethren would never have been attempted, but for the departures manifested in late movements from the principles of the founders of our Government. While Great Britain has been breaking down slavery and monopoly in the West Indies, the hand that has been felt from this quarter was that of the fillibuster. Cuba was ready to fly to the embraces of the United States, when she was repelled by two successive lawless expeditions, unmistakably marked by the features of the buccaneers who ravaged that island of old.

And what have been the concomitants of General Walker's invasion? A proclamation revoking the constitutional decree delivering the greatest mass of the people from slavery; and the principle thus manifested was fitly illustrated by military executions, butcheries in the streets of the cities, and, lastly, by the conflagration of one of the oldest. These atrocities had the effect of uniting the people of these distracted States, at last, in one common object—the expulsion of the oppressor. Happily for the fame of our country, the renewal of this horrible enterprise has been thoroughly rebuked by the patriotism, courage, and decision of Commodore Paulding. The name has acquired a new luster to emblazon that which it inherits from the Revolution. If the commodore's act had the sanction of the Administration in advance, or shall receive it now, some proof will be given that it is not altogether degenerate, and much will have been done to remove from us the aversion, the want of confidence in the justice of this Republic, and the fear that it countenances a design to fix a yoke on Central America, instead of rescuing it from usurpation—results to be hailed as tending to fit our Government for the relation it should hold towards the Republics of this continent.

If, on the other hand, the Administration takes part with Walker and the faction in this country that support him, it will show to all the world that the scheme for the propagation of slavery by the sword, of which it has given strong indications in Kansas, is extended to the whole regions of the South. Such a scheme can never succeed

unless the principle avowed as the basis of it, by Walker, shall prevail. *The triumph of "military rule"* over civil institutions in the slave States, and their separation from the free States, North and West, must be won as the first step to conquest; and then, as the next step, the whole power of the free Republics on this side of the Atlantic, and the hostile feeling, if not the direct force of Europe, must be encountered. The connection of the Atchison-Kansas conspiracy with that of Walker's against Central America is visible in the instruments who put them in motion. The same men, North and South, encourage both. Funds were raised for them in the same quarters; and such men as Colonel Titus are seen to emerge at one time in Kansas, at another in Nicaragua. The masses of the people nor their elevated statesmen, neither of the North nor South, of the East or West, not even the great body of the slave-owners, have any heart in the propagation of slavery. Apart from the politicians who use the question for their own advancement, the design has no support but in the enemies of the Union, who hate free government from the bitterness of their hearts, or from a vanity they would dignify as aristocratic pride.

In my opinion, the propagation of slavery can only be successfully resisted by the propagation of freedom. It is this mission, arrogated by Great Britain as peculiarly hers, which has conferred on her the preponderance she holds in almost every portion of the earth. She has swayed it with an iron hand, but everywhere of late years Anglo-Saxon justice, civilization, and Christianity, wherever they prevailed, have allowed every man to feel the comfort of laboring for himself, and he has labored all the better for his country.

Great Britain has her hands full in christianizing, civilizing, and improving, for commercial usefulness, the old continents. She must leave to us the regeneration of the new one; and this I find, from a paper in a late Westminster Review, marked by the editor with an unusual notification ascribing it to "*an able and distinguished contributor*," seems to be the opinion of some of the great men of England. This eloquent writer, describing the missions of what he calls "the four Empires," RUSSIA, FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, and the UNITED STATES, assigns its office to the latter in the following passage:

"And it may once for all be assumed that the human race, whatever Cabinets or Parliaments may think of it, will not be driven from their inevitable course. The work which has begun so largely will go forward. The Asiatic independence which survives will narrow down and grow feeble, and at last die. The will and the intellect of the more advanced races will rule in due time over that whole con-

continent. The genius of France will follow the shores of the Mediterranean; the line of kingdoms which divides the empires of England and Russia will grow thinner, till their frontiers touch. In spite of Clayton-Bulwer treaties, and Dallas-Clarendon interpretations of them, the United States will stretch their shadow ever further south. Revolution will cease to tear the empire of Montezuma. The falling Republics of Central America will not forever be a temptation, by their weakness, to the attacks of lawless ruffians. The valley of the mighty Amazon, which would grow corn enough to feed a thousand million mouths, must fall at last to those who will force it to yield its treasures. The ships which carry the commerce of America into the Pacific, carry, too, American justice and American cannon as the preachers of it. The Emperor of Japan supposed, that by Divine right, doing as he would with his own, he might close his country against his kind; that when vessels in distress were driven into his port, he might seize their crews as slaves, or kill them as unlicensed trespassers. An armed squadron, with the star-spangled banner flying, found its way into the Japan waters, and his serene Majesty was instructed that in nature's statute-book there is no right conferred on any man to act unrighteously, because it is his pleasure; that, in their own time, and by their own means, the upper powers will compel him, whether he pleases or not, to bring his customs into conformity with wiser usage."

The starting-point in this new career is the resumption of the progress which received its impulse in the revolution tending to the deliverance of the white laboring class of this country from the superincumbent weight of African slavery. This redemption of our own race from its vassalage under slavery has been brought to a standstill, and six millions of our free white kindred endure deprivation, corporeal and intellectual, from the slave occupation of the soil and of the pursuits which would add to their means of living and their sources of mental improvement. Neither the slave owners, nor the slave States, are responsible for the arrest of the enfranchisement which promised blessings to the toilers of both races. For, whether as a slave or free man, the presence of multitudes of the black race is found to be fatal to the interests of our race; their antagonism is as strong as that of oil and water, and so long as no convenient outlet, through which the manumitted slave can reach a congenial climate and country willing to receive him, is afforded, the institution of slavery stands on compulsion. But let me suppose Central America—tempting in gold and every production of the tropical soil to stimulate exertion, with a climate innoxious only to the black man—were opened up to him, under circumstances to advance him in the scale of humanity, how long before masters in all the temperate slave States would make compositions to liberate them on terms that would indemnify them for transplantation? Hundreds of more benevolent owners would, from a sense of public good and for conscience sake, by wills, or

by deeds of emancipation, make this deliverance, if the General Government would take the charge of the deportation to the region it might acquire for them—a gradual and voluntary emancipation by individuals, if not by States, would thus in time be accomplished. I hold that it is the duty of the nation to offer this boon to slaveholders and to the slave States to enable them to have complete control of the subject, which is the source of so much anxiety and mischief to them.

What a change would soon be wrought in the condition of Maryland and Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky, and in my own State, Missouri, if a smooth way were opened into the heart of the tropics—prodigal of wealth in the soil, in the mines, and in the forests; where the labor of the robust and skillful freedman, assisted by the capital and instruction, and inspired by the energy of enterprising American merchants, miners, or planters, would start everything into life. The mixed condition of the four different classes which, in our grain-growing States, obstruct each other; the masters dependent on the slaves, the slaves on their masters; the free negroes hanging on the skirts of both; while the great mass, the free white laborers, are cast out, in a great measure, from employment and all ownership in the soil, would be succeeded by the most useful of all the tillers of the earth, small freeholders and an independent tenantry. The influx of immigrants from Europe and the North, with moderate capital already running into Maryland and Virginia, would, as these States sloughed the black skin, fill up the rich region around the Chesapeake bay, the noblest bay in the world, fed by the most beautiful rivers, and brooded over by the most genial climate, and make it fulfill the prediction of Washington, who said, slavery abolished, it would become "the garden of America." The wilderness shores of the great inland sea, now almost as silent as in the days of Powhatan, would be alive with population; and the waters, now covered with swans, wild geese, and wild ducks, would be covered with sails and kept in commotion by the rush of steamers over them. The great rivers that run to waste over many latitudes of the healthful temperate zone would thunder with machinery, and the little Merrimac in Massachusetts, which, though frozen half the year, produces ninety millions of manufactures, would find more than a hundred rivals in giant streams which are precipitated in the Chesapeake. The mountains would give to the hand of free labor boundless wealth in coal, salt, and ores, and their surface in pasturing innumerable herds and flocks. The plains and valleys would teem with grain, the lowlands with meadow, and the

Old Dominion, instead of being "the lone mother of dead empires," would resume her hereditary crown and nascent strength, imparting new growth to all her offspring States. The noble ambition which once led the way to preëminence in this great Confederacy must again be attained by a love of liberty, by love of justice, by a magnanimous patriotism, prompt to make any sacrifice of temporary convenience for the great moral and political principles, the foundation of free institutions. The attempt to enforce slavery in Kansas and Central America by the sword, and thus make the whole intermediate space on the continent fall under its ascendancy, will fail. There is no Mohammed to establish such a do-

minion, nor is this age—the age of Christian strength and popular power—one to succumb to slavery propagandist prophets. Indeed, the Moslems all over the world have fallen so low, under the influence of this part of their creed, that they are obliged to surrender, and take the law from the accursed nations they stigmatize as Franks. The civilized world is at war with the propagation of slavery, whether by fraud or by the sword; and those who look to gain political ascendancy on this continent by bringing the weight of this system, like an enormous yoke, not to subject the slaves only, but also their fellow-citizens and kindred of the same blood, have made false auguries of the signs of the times.